**Ramses**

King Ramses II

Ramses (răm′sēz), Rameses**,** or Ramesses (both: răm′əsēz″), was the name of several kings of ancient Egypt. The kings of the XX dynasty, were all named Ramses. Ramses **I,** who succeeded Horemheb, died after only one year as king.

His son was Seti I, whose son in turn was Ramses II. Ramses II was not the ***heir*** to the throne but took it from his brother. He reigned for 67 years (1292–1225 B.C.). Under him Egypt acquired unprecedented splendor. The most notable incident of his reign was a battle near Kadesh, where the Egyptians were ambushed by the Hittites. After this battle Ramses II, claimed to have saved his forces single-handedly, a feat that led to many texts being written about his personal ***valor***.

Ramses left monuments throughout Egypt. The main ones are the temple at Karnak, the Rameseum, his ***mortuary*** temple, at Thebes; the temple at Luxor; and the great rock temple at Abu Simbel that has four seated figures of the king on the ***façade*** you can see when standing in front. The period of his rule was characterized by great luxury, increased slavery, and the growth of a mercenary army, all of which led to the final decline of Egypt.

Ramses III was the last important Ramses (reigned c.1198–1167 B.C.) and second king of the XX dynasty. During his time of rule he fought off attempted invasions by the Libyans and the threat of the sea peoples who were camping in Syria waiting to invade Egypt. Although he was able to maintain an Asian empire in Palestine, he was the last Egyptian king to hold territory in this region. The accumulation of slaves and the tremendous wealth of the ***nobility*** made the Egyptian social structure top heavy, therefore weakening it so it could not recover. Following Ramses III, the XX dynasty continued to be ruled by kings with the name Ramses, but little worth noting occurred during their ***reigns***. The dynasty ended with Ramses XI in 1090 B.C.

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